

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Samuel Digirolamo on Oct 24, 2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

- a) on lines 2-3 of the abstract, the title of the invention "METHOD AND DEVICE FOR DETECTING DIRECTION OF MEMBER HAVING OUTER PERIPHERY FORMED IN VERTICALLY ASYMMETRICAL SHAPE" has been deleted;
- b) on line 4 of the abstract, "[0058]" has been deleted;
- c) on lines 5-8 of the abstract, " The components include, for example, disk-like, cylindrical, or annular components, more specifically engine parts having an orientation such as piston rings." has been deleted (the abstract was longer than 150 words);
- d) on line 7 of claim 7, -- , wherein the top-bottom orientation of the component is identified based on a gap created between the outer peripheral part of the component and the reference block -- has been added after " reference block".

Reasons for Allowance

Claims 1-7 allowed.

As to claims 1-7 the prior of record, taken alone or in combination, fails to disclose or render obvious a method or device wherein an outer peripheral part of the

component on the reference surface is brought into contact with the reference block and the top-bottom orientation of the component is identified based on a gap created between the outer peripheral part of the component and the reference block, in combination with the rest of the limitations of claims 1 and 7 respectively.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Amanda H Merlino whose telephone number is 571-272-2421. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday and Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gregory J Toatley, Jr. can be reached on 571-272-2800 ext 77. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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October 24, 2008

/Gregory J. Toatley, Jr./
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11/5/2008